



CASE OF BSE IN THE UNITED STATES CHRONOLOGY OF EVENTS

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December 9, 2003	A non-ambulatory dairy cow believed to be about 4-1/2 years old arrives at Verns Moses Lake Meats, a slaughter plant in Moses Lake, WA; the animal's condition is attributed to complications from calving. Consistent with USDA's standard testing protocols for BSE, samples are taken from the animal and all potential high-risk material (central nervous system tissue) is diverted out of the human food supply and into rendering.
December 11	Samples from the animal arrive at USDA's National Veterinary Services Laboratories (NVSL) in Ames, IA. Because the animal had no neurological signs at slaughter, it was not considered to be a higher priority for BSE and the samples were placed in the normal queue for testing.
December 22	Preliminary test results are positive for BSE; NVSL conducts further testing.
December 23	Further test results are positive for BSE. Secretary Veneman announces a "presumptive positive" case for BSE. A sample from the animal is hand-carried to the United Kingdom for final confirmatory testing at the BSE world reference laboratory in Weybridge, England.
	APHIS' epidemiological investigation begins. Quarantine placed on herd in Mabton, WA, in which the index animal had last resided.
December 23	USDA's Food Safety and Inspection Service initiates a Class II recall of meat (10,410 pounds) from the group of 20 animals slaughtered on December 9 at Verns Moses Lake Meats.
	USDA determines disposition of three calves from index animal: one died shortly after birth in October 2001. One is a yearling heifer and is in the index herd in Mabton, WA, which is under State quarantine. The third is the most recently born calf, a bull calf, and is in a herd in Sunnyside, WA, which is placed under State quarantine
December 25	UK world reference laboratory confirms USDA diagnosis of BSE.

	<p>Traceback of index animal continues. It is believed likely that the index animal was purchased into Mabton herd from a dairy cattle finishing farm in Mattawa, WA. The other, less likely, possibility is that it came from an area livestock market.</p>
December 27	<p>USDA's traceback investigation indicates that the affected cow was likely imported from Canada in 2001 and that she was likely 6-1/2 years old, rather than 4-1/2 years old as the last owner's records had indicated. Investigative efforts continue and involve Canadian officials.</p> <p>USDA team departs Washington for Japan to pursue trade talks.</p>
December 28	<p>USDA's Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS) determines that two tertiary cosignees (the customers of Willamette Valley Meats) of the recalled beef products had limited further distribution to four other states, including Alaska, Montana, Hawaii and Idaho, as well as the U.S. territory of Guam. These areas are in addition to the primary distribution in Oregon and Washington, with some product shipped to Nevada and California. FSIS continues to traceback the distribution of any recalled meat to ensure compliance with the recall.</p> <p>Traceback of the index animal continues. USDA is also continuing to trace the 73 other cows that came in the same shipment.</p>
December 29	<p>USDA determines that records obtained from the owner of the index animal correspond with Canada's records indicating that this animal was approximately 6 ½ years old at the time of slaughter. USDA is working with Canada to conduct DNA tests to verify that the correct animal has been identified.</p> <p>Tracebacks of the index animal, along with the 73 other cows from the same shipment, continues. USDA identifies 8 additional cows from the same herd in Canada as the index cow that may have entered the United States. USDA begins tracing these animals.</p> <p>FSIS determines that the recalled meat products were distributed to 42 locations from Interstate Meats and Willamette Valley Meats, with at least 80 percent of the products distributed to stores in Oregon and Washington. FSIS is verifying that these 42 distributors, along with the original distributors, are complying with requirements to notify their customers.</p>

December 30	<p>Agriculture Secretary Ann Veneman announces additional safeguards to bolster the U.S. protection system against BSE and to further protect public health:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• downer cattle and specified risk material and tissues will immediately be banned from the human food chain skull, brain, trigeminal ganglia, eyes, vertebral column, spinal cord and dorsal root ganglia of cattle over 30 months of age and a portion of the small intestine of cattle of all ages are now considered specified risk materials and are prohibited from entering the human food supply• any normal cattle, if they are targeted for BSE surveillance testing at slaughter, will no longer be marked as "inspected and passed" until confirmation is received that the animals have, in fact, tested negative for BSE• dorsal root ganglia, clusters of nerve cells connected to the spinal cord along the vertebrae column, in addition to already-prohibited spinal cord tissue, will be prohibited in products labeled as "meat"• the air-injection stunning of cattle will be prohibited• mechanically separated meat in human food will be prohibited• a verifiable system of national animal identification will be immediately implemented (See USDA's 12/30/03 press release for more specifics) <p>Traceback of the index animal continues. USDA continues working closely with Canadian officials to conduct DNA testing of the index cow.</p> <p>Through the traceback of the index animal, USDA determines that 82 cattle (including the positive cow) were cleared for shipment into the United States. USDA is verifying the actual number that entered the United States and the location of each animal. Initial information from Canada suggested only 74 of the 82 cattle on the health certificate were shipped to the United States. However, since USDA cannot rule out the possibility that the other eight also came across the border, USDA is looking at import/export records, as well as on-farm records, for all remaining 81 cattle.</p>

December 31	<p>USDA continues to work with Canadian officials to verify the traceback of the index animal. USDA is working with Canada to conduct DNA tests in both countries. Testing is expected to begin this evening and results could be available as early as next week.</p> <p>Through the traceback investigation, USDA learns that the Canadian health certificate, dated August 28, 2001, lists 82 eartag numbers from cattle that were part of a herd dispersal in Alberta, Canada. One of those eartag numbers matches that number on the BSE-positive cow. Nine of the 82 are part of the index herd in Washington State. Currently, USDA has information that suggests that 81 of the 82 animals crossed the border into the United States. However, since USDA cannot rule out the possibility that all the animals came into the United States, USDA is looking at import/export records, as well as on-farm records, for all remaining 72 cattle.</p> <p>USDA appoints an international team of experts to review the Department's investigation and make national recommendations following the completion of the epidemiological investigation. The team will be similar to the group that conducted such a review in Canada.</p>
January 2	<p>USDA confirms that 81 of the 82 animals listed on the Canadian health certificate, which includes the eartag number for the index cow, entered the United States through Oroville, WA, on September 4, 2001.</p> <p>USDA has 11 of the 82 cattle definitely accounted for including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• One is the index cow• Nine are those known to be in the index herd• One animal is on the Mattawa premises• Also, USDA believes one animal may still be in Canada

	<p>Tracebacks of the other 70 animals continue. USDA has good leads on the whereabouts of many of these animals.</p> <p>USDA announces that three facilities are under hold orders during the epidemiological investigation. The first facility is the index herd, while the second is a nearby facility that has the index cow's recently born bull calf. The third facility is a dairy operation in Mattawa where one animal from the original herd of 82 is located.</p> <p>USDA and Canadian officials continue DNA tests to determine the identification of the index animal. Two USDA epidemiologists are in Canada to assist with the testing, while two Canadian epidemiologists are in the United States to assist with the DNA testing.</p> <p>USDA is working closely with industry to reposition its efforts to collect samples of high-risk animals for BSE surveillance testing on farms, at rendering facilities, and other locations.</p>
January 5	<p>USDA announces the decision to depopulate the bull calf operation in Sunnyside, Washington, that includes a calf born to the heifer infected with BSE prior to the heifer's slaughter this past December. There are approximately 450 cattle on the premises, and operations will proceed this week but will likely be dependent on weather conditions in the Mabton area. The calves will be transported to a currently unused slaughter facility.</p> <p>USDA will have animal care experts on hand at both the farm where the calves will be loaded and at the slaughter facility to ensure humane treatment of the animals. The animals will be euthanized according to American Veterinary Medical Association animal welfare euthanasia guidelines. No products from any of the slaughtered animals will enter the human food chain, nor will products be rendered.</p> <p>A USDA team departs Washington for Mexico to pursue trade talks.</p> <p>USDA and Canadian officials continue DNA tests to determine the identification of the index animal. Test results are expected sometime this week.</p> <p>USDA has 11 of the 82 cattle that were listed on the Canadian health certificate, including the index cow,</p>

	<p>definitely accounted for. USDA believes that one of the animals is still in Canada. Tracebacks of the other 70 animals continue. USDA has good leads on the whereabouts of many of these animals.</p>
January 6	<p>USDA announces that DNA evidence now helps to verify—with a high degree of certainty—that the BSE positive cow found in Washington State originated from a dairy farm in Alberta, Canada.</p> <p>USDA depopulates the bull calf operation outside Sunnyside, WA. Approximately 450 calves are transported from the farm to a designated slaughter facility and euthanized according to American Veterinary Medical Association humane guidelines. USDA officials secure the animal carcasses overnight.</p> <p>Other elements of the investigation, including animal tracebacks, continue on both sides of the border and may provide additional information. This includes the cattle feed investigation in Canada as well as the additional DNA testing.</p>
January 7	<p>USDA disposes of the carcasses of the depopulated calves by landfill. None of the carcasses entered the human food supply chain or were rendered.</p> <p>USDA locates another animal that came into the United States with the index cow, which is also located in a Mattawa, WA dairy herd. USDA has 12 of the 82 cattle listed on the Canadian health certificate definitely accounted for including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The index cow • Nine known to be in the index herd • Two animals on a Mattawa premises <p>USDA also believes that one of the animals listed on the health certificate remained in Canada and did not enter the United States. Tracebacks of the other 69 animals that entered the United States continues. USDA has good leads on the whereabouts of many of these animals.</p> <p>A Japanese delegation arrives in the United States to participate in trade talks.</p>

January 8	<p>USDA finishes disposal of the carcasses of the depopulated calves by landfill. None of the carcasses entered the human food supply or were rendered. USDA's Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS) has submitted three rules and one notice for publication in the Federal Register on Monday, January 12, 2003. The rules and notice are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · An interim final rule declaring that the Specified Risk Materials, the skull, brain, trigeminal ganglia, eyes, vertebral column, spinal cord and dorsal root ganglia of cattle 30 months of age or older, and the small intestine of all cattle are specified risk materials, and prohibited in the food supply. (Tonsils were already excluded). These prohibitions will be effective immediately upon publication in the Federal Register. · An interim final rule expanding on the prohibition of central nervous system tissues in advanced meat recovery products. · A final rule to prohibit air injection stunning. · A notice announcing that FSIS inspectors will not mark ambulatory cattle that have been targeted for BSE surveillance testing as "inspected and passed" until negative test results are obtained.
January 9	<p>USDA announces it will begin accepting license applications for BSE tests. Heretofore, USDA's Center for Veterinary Biologics has been accepting and reviewing data from companies that have various rapid tests, but has not formally accepted applications for licensing. USDA announces it will soon begin to remove a limited number of cows from the index herd in Mabton, Washington. At this time, USDA will most likely remove approximately 130 animals from this herd that contains approximately 4,000 dairy cows. To summarize results thus far from the epidemiological investigation:</p> <p>Of the 81 cows that came from Canada with the positive cow:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · One is the positive cow · Two are under a hold order at a premises in Mattawa · USDA believes 7 may have gone to another dairy and is working to determine if those animals are still there · Nine are in the index herd · Potentially some of the remaining cows that came in that shipment are on the index premises, but at this time the identity of these animals has not been confirmed.

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